A KIND INVITATION To the PEOPLE called QUAKERS,

To the due Consideration of

Some Important Truths:

In a *Letter* and *Twenty Questions*, sent long since to their *Second-days Meeting*, and now to them all.

To both which, an ANSWER from their present *Yearly Meeting*, 1697. is desired.

To William Penn, *& the rest*, &c. [illegible] nd-Days-Meeting.

WILLIAM, *with the rest of* [illegible] *h thee*,

MY Hearts desire and Prayer to God for you all, is, that ye may be Saved: for I am perswaded that you have a Zeal of God, at least many of you, though not according to Knowledge in some things. Nevertheless, whereto ye have attained, in that I desire ye may be established, and that God will be graciously pleased to reveal the rest to you, that ye may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing. For which purpose I come, I trust by the Grace of God, with a Message of Grace and Peace to you. I am well satisfied that it is no meer Humane Project or Artifice that at first raised you up, and hath conducted you hitherto: but a Supernatural Power, and that it is of the Lord, some way or other, (as was the Separation of the Ten Tribes from *Reboboam*, 1 Kings 12.) for Correction and Reformation of something amiss in this Church. And therefore I dare not presume, either upon my own head, or by my own Ability, to intermeddle in it. But my Heart is inlarged towards you upon these Considerations: 1. That ye do assert one of the Great and Chief Principles of the Christian Religion, which I have observed to be very unworthily and even despitefully treated by too many, who have gotten into (or seek) Preferments and Imployment in the Church, without Check or Reproof; and so unworthily deserted by most, for fear of Reproach, or Disgrace, or hindrance in their Preferment,

that I have not known it generously asserted by above two or three in the Pulpit, (but those great Men indeed) though it be plainly a Doctrine most authentickly and solemnly professed and declared in the *Church of England*. 2. That ye do bear a good Testimony against other Abuses connived at; or tolerated amongst us. 3. I am moved with Pity towards you, that you should have so great Causes of Offence or Scandal given you, against the Holy and Established Institutions and Ordinances of Christ, for the Ministerial Office; for the Admission of Proselytes; and for the great Solemnity of the Christian Worship, which hath been so long abused with Controversies, that I know very few Persons now amongst us, who do rightly and compleatly understand it; and even against the Person, Satisfaction, and Merits of Christ himself. But when I consider your Notions and Sentiments concerning these things, though I am well satisfied that you are under the Conduct and Energy of some Spiritual Power; yet, *What that Spirit is?* and, *Whether One or Divers?* in my Judgment, doth deserve very good Consideration. Ye know what Spirit it was, which God sent between *Abimilech* and the *Shechemites*, Judg. 9. 23. and what that was, that was sent from the Lord to *Saul*, 1 Sam. 6. 14. and what that was, that was commissioned by God in the case of *Ahab*, 1 King. 22. 22, 23. and what that was, in the midst of the Princes of *Noph*, Isa. 19, 14. which was from the Lord too. And that such a Spirit hath been among some call'd *Quakers*, is manifest both by their Actions, Speeches, and Writings; nay, the very Spirit of the Devil, and of Antichrist, is apparent and undeniable, from the Indignities offered, both in word and deed, to Holy things. But that is not the thing now to be considered, what Spirits may have appeared among them. For even among the Apostles, Satan had power to enter into *Judas*; and it is not improbable but those, whom our Saviour told, *Ye know not what Spirit ye are of*; and even *Peter* himself, when our Saviour said to him, *Get thee behind me, Satan*, might not at the time be free from some Impressions of Evil Spirits. That, 'tis likely, was a Peculiarity of our Saviours, for the Prince of this World to have nothing in him. But the thing to be considered, is, *What Spirit that is which at first excited, and hath now the Conduct of the whole Body of this People?* And, not, whether it be sent, or commissioned from God? but, *Whether* it be *one of the Ministring Spirits* sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation? or, *One of those Seducing Spirits*, to whom, in the latter times, that some would give heed, was, in the times of the Apostles, expresly said by the Spirit of God? And

great

great *Reaſon* there is to take this into very deep Conſideration: 1. Becauſe of the many and weighty *Cautions* given by our Saviour and his Apoſtles, and left upon record in the Sacred Scriptures, for our warning in theſe latter times, to beware of them, and not to go out after them; with *Admonitions* concerning their Subtilty, their Energy or Power, and their ſtrong Deluſions to deceive, if it were poſſible, the very Elect; and that even Satan himſelf is transformed into an Angel of Light, that is, puts on the Appearance of an Angel of Light, (2 *Cor.* 11. 14.) and, laſtly, that we ſhould try the Spirits, (1 *Jo.* 4. 1.) 2. Becauſe, if the *Tryal* be by Agreement or Diſagreement with the Doctrine, Inſtitutions, and Ordinances of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles authorized by him, they may ſeem to have apoſtatized and gone off, or, at leaſt, fallen ſhort of them in matters of great moment, and ſpecial concern, thoſe before-mentioned; and therefore to be Seduced by ſome *Spirit of Error:* For I doubt not but the Devil himſelf hath that Malice and Envy againſt the Man Chriſt Jeſus, by whom he hath been Conquered and Vanquiſhed, and againſt the Solemn Memorial of that Victory, that could he but keep People from engaging in that Holy Covenant with Him by Baptiſm, and from the Solemnity of that Memorial, he would be willing himſelf to lead them into all other Truth, upon that condition, rather than fail. Yet, notwithſtanding, ſince they are a Sober People, have received, retain, and do act upon one of the chief Principles of Chriſtianity, and have divers commendable things in them; and what Errors they have fallen into, have been occaſioned by the Scandals and Offences given by thoſe of the Church, who will have a ſad account to anſwer for it: I do hope, in the Mercy and Goodneſs of God, that if it be a good Spirit which hath the Conduct of them, he ſhall lead and diſpoſe thoſe who are Sincere amongſt them, to the acknowledgement of the Truth in thoſe things whereto they have not yet attained; and if it be otherwiſe, he ſhall be forced to reſign the Conduct of them to a more powerful and better Guide; and that we ſhall ſee ſuch a Society of *Compleat Chriſtians* come out of this deſpiſed People, as are at this time hardly to be found in any part of the World, as I know of. Theſe are my Thougots, and Hopes concerning this People in general at preſent. And Hopes, I ſay, grounded upon the Mercy of God, and Power of God, which no Good Being would oppoſe; nor no Evil Power can ſtand before. And in His Name I come unto you, knowing aſſuredly that neither I, nor any Humane Ability, is able to prevail againſt the Power that is amongſt you, notwithſtanding the Truths that I have mentioned already,

and ſhall endeavour, by the Grace and Aſſiſtance of God Almighty, through our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, more fully to explain unto you in due time: But, as I ſaid, if it be a good Power, it will favour me, and aſſiſt me in it, and rejoyce in it too: and if it be an evil Power commiſſioned, it muſt ceaſe, and ſubmit to that Victorious and All-conquering Name: Its Enchantments muſt be diſſolved, and its Sophiſtry and Fallacies detected. I therefore, as an Ambaſſador of Chriſt, in the Spirit and Meekneſs of Chriſt, beſeech you, Be ye reconciled to the Truths of God, and receive them with that Reverence and Gratitude that is meet, without Cavelling, or regard to any Temporal concern. I do not invite you to return to the Abuſes and Corruptions which you have forſaken, but to thoſe Truths, and to the due uſe of thoſe Holy things, againſt which you have been Scandalized by thoſe Abuſes and Corruptions. Nor do I invite you to diſſolve your Society, or to leave off your Meetings, and drown your ſelves in a promiſcuous Multitude. No, you have in part born a good Teſtimony, and I would have you do ſo ſtill: But I invite you only to make your Teſtimony more Compleat, Illuſtrious and Irrefragable, by bearing your Teſtimony to the whole Truth; and not any longer a Teſtimony, like the Feet of *Daniel*'s Image, partly ſtrong, and partly weak, by a mixture of Truth with Falſhood; for that cannot ſtand long together; but to ſtrengthen the things that remain, and ſet in order the things that are wanting, that ye may ſtand; for otherwiſe ye will be certainly Broken to Pieces. I invite you but to what I am doing my ſelf with a ſmall Company of Poor People, that is, bearing a Teſtimony for God, and manifeſtly under his Conduct: But it is neglected by them, to whom it hath been offered for a ſufficient Time, and in a ſufficient Manner, conſidering their Learning, and pretence to Knowledge: And now it is offered to you, a deſpiſed People, that God may humble the Proud and High-minded, and confound the Wiſdom of the Wiſe, by mean and deſpicable things in the ſight of Men. Be Wiſe, and neglect not the Opportunity, and you, who were laſt in the Worlds account, ſhall be firſt. Whatever you do, you will find there is ſolid Truth in the Propoſal, and I wiſh you may receive it to the Honour and Glory of God, and your own Comfort and Salvation; and you will then find me to have been

Your Sincere and Cordial Friend,

31 *Auguſt*, 1696.

E. S.

The

The Twenty Queſtions.

I. WHETHER there be not a great Party of *fallen Angels and wicked Spirits*, which are Enemies to Mankind, and with all the Power, Activity and Subtilty they can, do continually endeavour to hinder their Salvation, and Communion and Union with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

II. Whether *the Word*, which in the beginning was with God, and was God, was not *made Fleſh*, and dwelt amongſt Men, being born of the Virgin *Mary*, and called *Jeſus*, which ſignifies a Saviour, and *Chriſt*, the *Meſſiah*, the anointed of God, and *Jeſus Chriſt of Nazareth*?

III. Whether *his Appearance* in Mortal Fleſh was not *to deſtroy the Works of the Devil*, the Prince of the Party of fallen Angels and wicked Spirits; to be a Prince and a Saviour to Mankind, and the Captain of their Salvation to all who receive him, and ſubject themſelves intirely to his Teachings, by his Example, and by his Doctrine, and Precepts, and Orders recorded in the Holy Scriptures, and by the Motions of his Holy Spirit upon and in their Hearts and Minds?

IV. Whether he be not the *Only Mediatour* between God and Man; ſo that Man can have no Communion with the Holy God, or Participation of the Spirit of Holineſs, but by and through Him?

V. Whether that Party of *fallen Angels and wicked Spirits*, knowing this, do not above all things *endeavour*, by all means, *to withhold People from cloſing and uniting with that Holy Mediatour*, and to withdraw as many as they can as much as they can from Him?

VI. Whether *their moſt dangerous and ſubtile Actings* in this Oppoſition be not principally, *by Way of Deceit*, under the Appearance and Pretence of Good to Man, and of Good Spirits?

VII. Whether it hath not been foretold, that, in the latter times eſpecially, there ſhould be many *falſe Teachers*, who, with ſuch ſpecious Pretences and ſecret Energy, ſhould endeavour to draw away People from the Faith, as to deceive, if it was poſſible, the very Elect; and Warnings given to beware of them, by Chriſt, and by his Apoſtles?

VIII. Whether *the Spirit of God* and *the Spirit of Chriſt* be not the ſame, and a Holy and Pure Spirit, a Spirit of Truth and Righteouſneſs, leading into all neceſſary Truth, and from all Fraud, Deceit, and Fallacy, Cavils, and ſhuffling Evaſions?

IX. Whe-

IX. Whether it be not reaſonable *that Chriſt Jeſus*, who had done ſo much for Man, ſhould *preſcribe* what Manner he pleaſed for his Peoples engaging with Him; and for their recognizing Him, and making their Solemn Addreſs to the Father by Him; and what Orders he pleaſed, and would have obſerved and continued in his Church?

X. Whether *to oppoſe* ſuch Appointments, Preſcriptions or Orders, *or to cavil* at them, ſeek Evaſions or Pretences to neglect them, and yet pretend to be Chriſtians, be not a great Evidence of Inſincerity, and of a ſubtile Antichriſtian Spirit of Satan transformed into an Angel of Light?

XI. Whether Jeſus Chriſt, beſides his General Command to his Apoſtles after his Reſurrection, to go to the *Gentiles, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*, &c. did not for *forty days* ſhew himſelf to them, *ſpeaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghoſt, had given Commandments unto them, and in or with thoſe *Commandments* give them ſufficient *Inſtructions and Directions* for the Conſtituting his Church, which he purchaſed with his Blood?

XII. Whether the *Apoſtles* did not in all things *faithfully purſue* his Commands and Directions?

XIII. Whether beſides his expreſs Commands and Directions, they did not alſo *receive the Holy Spirit*, according to his Promiſe in an extraordinary manner, and had the ſame *reſiding in them*, and *manifeſting his Preſence* with them, by extraordinary Operations, to guide and aſſiſt them in their Work?

XIV. Whether they having received the Command to make Diſciples in all Nations, (whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*) baptizing them, as aforeſaid, and teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever he commanded them, did not in all places Preach the Goſpel, exhort the People to believe and be *baptized*, and baptized with Water thoſe who did believe, though baptized before with *John's Baptiſm*, and though they had received the Holy Spirit, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles?*

XV. Whether the Apoſtles, and the People converted by them, after they had received the Holy Ghoſt, did not, when they came together in one, or aſſembled for the Solemn Worſhip of God, *break Bread*, and *eat the Lord's Supper*, and do as their Lord did, and commanded them to do; and that ſo conſtantly, that there is not known any Aſſembly of Chriſtians in the time of the Apoſtles, nor in many Ages after, to have been held for the Solemn Worſhip of God without it?

XVI. Whe-

XVI. Whether the Apoſtles did not *ordain Elders*, and appoint others, by ſpecial Appointment, to do the ſame in every City; by ſuch Authority, that none did preſume to take the Office of *Elder* unto himſelf, but who was ſo ordained; or the Office of *Ordaining Elders*, but who was ſo appointed; either in the times of the Apoſtles, or afterward, but who have been Infamous ever ſince?

XVII. Whether ſeeing that our Saviour himſelf, though he needed not, would notwithſtanding be baptized with Water, to fulfill all Righteouſneſs, and thereupon had ſenſible Approbation from Heaven, did alſo by his Apoſtles baptize with Water; and that it is plain by their Practice, that his Apoſtles, and the whole Church of Chriſt, did underſtand his Command to baptize all Nations, of Baptizm by Water, and as neceſſary for Forgiveneſs of Sins; and that Baptiſm with the Holy Ghoſt was peculiar to himſelf: whether, I ſay, this being ſo, it be not a forced and ſtrained Interpretation, without any ſound ground, and contrary to the moſt authentick means of explaining words, to reſtrain that Command to Baptiſm by the Holy Ghoſt only?

XVIII. Whether, if ſuch Conſtruction be by any Spirit more than Humane, it be not the Spirit of Antichriſt, or Satan transformed, to with-hold Men under his own Dominion, from Solemnly ingaging with Chriſt, and from Forgiveneſs of their Sins in his Name? or, If it be only by Opinion of Men, ſuch Opinion obſtinately perſiſted in, be not a Damnable Sin, contrary to ſubjection of all Imaginations to the Obedience of Chriſt, and ſubverting of Souls, and ſuch Teachers to be abominated and anathamatized by all ſincere Chriſtians, as Seducers, and the Miniſters and Inſtruments of Satan, though they appear in Sheeps cloathing?

XIX. Whether, it having been the conſtant Belief of all Nations, (whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*) that they had a real, though Spiritual, Communion with the Gods they worſhipped, in their Participation of their Sacrifices, as St. *Paul* intimates, 1 *Cor.* 10. and may be proved by good Authority; and Chriſtians duly diſpoſed, having a like Communion with Chriſt in the participation of the Conſecrated Bread and Cup, as St. *Paul* affirms; and the Solemn Worſhipping of God, by preſenting our Prayers to the Father, with thoſe Memorials of our Saviour's Paſſion, being plainly a Recognition of our Redemption by Chriſt, and of his Dominion over us, acquired by his Paſſion, and that that is the only Propitiation, and He the only Mediator, by which, and by whom, we Mortals born in Sin can have Acceſs to, and Acceptance with the Father; and St. *Paul* having received the Doctrine of what he taught

taught concerning this, from the Lord; and the ancient Christians frequenting this Ordinance, after they had manifestly received the Holy Ghost: Whether, I say, this being so, to reject these either as Types and Shadows, (which are indeed Antitypes, as the *Grecians* express it, Solemn Memorials, and Sensible Declarations before God, Angels and Men, of present internal Actions of our Minds, for the greater Manifestation and Notoriety of the Fact) be not meer Sophistry, Shuffle and Evasion; or as needless, upon pretence that Christ is come to them in the Spirit; or of their having the Substance; be not to set up themselves in Pride above the Apostles and Holy Christians, who had so manifestly the Spirit of God; nay, above Christ himself, *viz.* to reject that as needless, which he instituted as necessary; and a plain Evidence of the Subtilty and Delusion of Satan, to oppose Christ, and detain and withdraw People from his Solemn Worship, and under the most specious appearance of the Spirit of God, by sensible Motions to things appearing Good, and by False Lights, to corrupt and adulterate them, and get and keep a residence in them, as if it was the Spirit of Christ? Whether such Obstinacy, such Fallacy, in such a Matter, of such Importance in Christianity, and yet so easie to Man, and void of all Exceptions, be not plain Evidence of a Mystery of Iniquity in it?

XX. Whether to deliver those things in the Name of the Lord, as immediately from the Lord, and by his Spirit, which may be plainly perceived and detected to proceed either from a Humane Spirit, or a Spirit of Error, be not a great Presumption against the Holy Majesty of God, and a great Scandal to the Holy Doctrine of the *Guidance of the Spirit of God*, and therefore a double and great Sin; the Sin of the False Prophets of old, and that which in *Germany* formerly, and since in this Nation, raised so great a Prejudice against the Truth?

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